

UPDATE

Controlling Your Asthma

If you have asthma, you are not alone. More than 14 million people in the United States have lung disease. Of these, almost five million are children. Asthma is a problem among all races. But the asthma death rate and hospitalization rate for blacks are three times the rate of whites. Proper asthma care could prevent these problems for all.

Five Questions to Ask When Your Asthma Doesn't Get Better

1. Is it something in my environment?

Half of all adults with asthma and 85 percent of children with asthma are allergic to something in their environment.

2. Is it something in my workplace?

About 15 percent of people who start getting asthma symptoms when they are adults are sensitive to something in their workplace. For example, more than 200 workplace chemicals are known to cause asthma.

3. Is it because I'm not taking my medicine the right way?

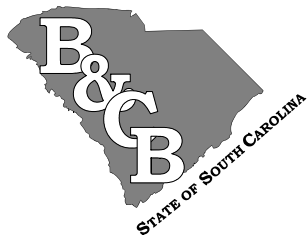
Some asthma medicines, such as steroid sprays, take days or weeks to start working. If you only use them now and then, they can't help you. About 60 percent of people with asthma don't follow their doctor's advice about taking their asthma medicine.

4. Is it because I'm not using my inhaler the right way?

Asthma inhalers can be hard to use. Many people with asthma don't use them the right way. If you aren't using the inhaler the right way, you aren't getting as much medicine into your lungs as you need.

5. Do I need to change medicines?

There are a lot of medicines to use for asthma and each one has different strengths. If the medicine you take now doesn't seem to be helping, another medicine might work better.



STATE HEALTH PLAN PREVENTION PARTNERS
South Carolina State Budget and Control Board
Office of Insurance Services-Insurance Benefits Management
June 2000

